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REMOVABLE MEDIA DRIVES

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REMOVABLE MEDIA DRIVES

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 This invention relates to removable media drives for computer systems and the like.

Computer systems typically contain different types of media drives that are located within the system housing. For most desk-based and rack-mounted systems the media drives are not intended to be removed, and are therefore screwed in place within the
10 system housing. As such components are not "user-replaceable" parts, the packaging of such drives is typically kept to a minimum to minimise costs.

It is known to provide portable computer systems with removable media drives. This is typically done to enable different types of media drives to be installed within a
15 compact system housing. This means that the possibility of using different media drives can be provided without needing to house all of the media drives in the housing at one time. Such media drives are normally housed in a carrier housing, which can be used to protect the media drive and/or for aesthetic reasons. However this adds to the cost of the removable media systems.

20 In computer systems designed to have high reliability, for example server computer systems, it is desirable to be able readily to change media drives in the event that they develop a fault. It would be desirable to use commercially available removable media drives. However, as described above, these tend to be expensive.

25 Accordingly, the present invention seeks to provide media drives for such applications that can readily be removed, without the expense of the conventional removable media drives.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A first aspect of the invention provides a system unit comprising a media drive bay, the media drive bay comprising a drive bay housing configured to receive a media drive, a connector to interface with a connector on a received media drive, a resilient tongue integral with the media drive bay housing, which resilient tongue is operable to urge onto a received media drive, and a detent for latching a latching member attached to the media drive.

- 10 The provision of the resilient tongue in combination with the detent for latching an inserted media drive means that a media drive intended for permanent installation can be securely held in a removable manner without the use of fasteners and tools. Because a standard media drive not originally designed for a removable application can be used, with the addition of the latching member, the cost of providing
- 15 removability is kept low. Where the drive bay housing is made of metal, the provision of the tongue also serves to ground the media drive casing, reducing electromagnetic interference.

- In an embodiment of the invention the resilient tongue is located on a first side of the drive bay housing. Support surfaces are defined on a second side of the drive bay housing opposite to the first side. In this manner, the resilient tongue applies pressure on an inserted media drive to press the media drive against the support surfaces. This provides secure mounting of the media drive within the housing, while allowing for reasonable tolerance during manufacture of the drive bay housing. The support
- 25 surfaces can be configured to form slides to facilitate sliding of the media drive into the media drive housing.

Another aspect of the invention provides the system unit in combination with the media drive.

A further aspect of the invention provides a latching member to be secured to a rear surface of a media drive, the latching member comprising a plate including formations to enable securing of the latching member to the rear surface of the media drive and an integral resilient latching projection.

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The resilient latching projection has an elongate portion that extends substantially perpendicularly in the plane of the plate and a latch at the end of the elongate portion remote from the plate.

- 10 The latching member can be secured to the rear surface of the media drive by screws that engage with pre-existing holes on the media drive casing.

The latch at then end of the resilient latching projection is configured to latch behind the detent of the media drive bay housing when the media drive is received by the

- 15 media drive.

The media drive can be a commercially available media drive for non-removable use, the media drive being modified by the provision of the latching member to provide for removability.

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Another aspect of the invention comprises such a commercially available media drive for non-removable use, the media drive being modified by the provision of a latching member as described above to provide for removability.

- 25 Further aspects and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following description of a particular embodiment.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Embodiments of the present invention will be described hereinafter, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings in which like reference
5 signs relate to like elements and in which:

Figure 1 is a physical plan view of a computer system that implements an embodiment of the invention;

Figure 2 illustrates part of the front of the computer system of Figure 1;

10 Figure 3 illustrates a commercially available media drive that has been modified for an embodiment of the invention;

Figure 4 is a further illustration of the modification to the media drive;

Figure 5 illustrates a media drive housing of an embodiment of the invention; and

15 Figure 6 is a further illustration of the media drive housing of an embodiment of the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF PARTICULAR EMBODIMENTS

An embodiment of the present invention will now be described, by way of example only.

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Figure 1 is a physical plan view of narrow form-factor computer system 1 designed for rack mounting. This computer system is compactly configured while offering high performance at reasonable cost.

- 10 The computer system 1 comprises an enclosure 10 with a front bezel 19 that is removable for front access to the disk drives and a System Configuration Card (SCC) 23 and reader 22. Rack mounting is supported for standard 19" racks via right-angled flanges (not shown). Slide-rail support is also provided.
- 15 The enclosure 10 is cooled, from front to rear, by two system fans 12, 14 mounted on a rear panel of the enclosure, with venting in the front and rear panels as required. The host processor (CPU) 16 also has its own dedicated local cooling comprising an impingement fan 18 that clips onto the CPU socket. These three fans plug directly into the motherboard 20 at 13, 15 and 17, respectively. The motherboard 20 is a PCB
- 20 assembly, designed in a custom form-factor to fit the enclosure 10. The shape of the motherboard is chosen so as to minimise cabling within the enclosure. The motherboard 20 carries the majority of circuitry within the computer system 1.

- All external interfaces are included directly on the rear edge of the motherboard, for
- 25 access through the rear-panel 11 of the enclosure 10. The external interfaces comprise two network interfaces 21, two serial interfaces 84, 86 and a Small Computer System Interface (SCSI) interface 78. Indicators for Power, Fault and Network Link status are also positioned at the rear of the enclosure.

- 30 A system, or host, processor (CPU) 16 for the computer system 1 is mounted in a standard 370 pin zero insertion force (ZIF) socket on the motherboard 20. It has a

passive heat sink. Dual in-line memory modules (DIMMs) are mounted in sockets 25 on the motherboard 20. A small printed circuit board (PCB) 22 is included at the front of the enclosure 10 to carry a System Configuration Card (SCC) 23 and LEDs 27 for Power and Fault status indication. A 10-way ribbon cable 24 connects this PCB to the

5 motherboard 20. Two SCSI hard disk drives 26 and 28 are mountable in respective bays to the front of the motherboard 20. The drives are hot pluggable and are accessible by removal of the front bezel 19 and EMI shields 30. The two internal SCSI hard disk drives 26 and 28 plug directly into the motherboard via right-angled connectors 32 located on the front edge of the motherboard 20.

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A slim CDROM drive bay is provided, mounted laterally in front of the motherboard for a CDROM drive 34. Compact disks may be inserted and removed via an access slot (not shown) located on the lower left side of the front bezel 19. A connector at the rear of the CDROM bay connects the CDROM drive 34 via a ribbon cable 36 to

15 the motherboard 20.

15

A Power Supply Unit (PSU) 38 is connected to the motherboard via a short harness 40 with two mating connectors 42 and 44 for power and services. The PSU 38 has its own cooling fan 46 and additionally houses the system power switch 48 and power

20 input connector(s) 50.

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Figure 2 illustrates part of the front of the computer system of Figure 1. This shows the front bezel 19 and the front 700 of a media drive, here the CD-ROM drive 34 that is accessible via the access slot 701 in the front bezel 19.

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Figure 3 illustrates a commercially available CD-ROM drive designed for non-removable use that has been modified for an embodiment of the invention. The CD-ROM drive 34 has a latching member 704 secured to the rear surface of the metal media drive casing 702 by means of fixings, for example screws, that use pre-existing

30 threaded holes in the casing 702. A connector 712 can be seen at the rear of the media drive casing for the electrical connections to the CD-ROM drive 34.

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Figure 4 is a further illustration of the modification to the media drive. This shows more clearly how the latching member 704 has a planar plate portion 706 that is screwed to the CD-ROM drive casing 702 by two screws 710. The latching member 704 also comprises a resilient latching projection that includes an elongate springy portion 707 with a latch 708 formed at the end thereof. The latching member 704 can be made of metal, for example of spring steel. Figure 4 also shown the connector 712 in more detail.

- 10 Figure 5 illustrates a media drive housing 720 of an embodiment of the invention. The media drive housing is an essentially box-shaped housing, preferably of metal, that is contained within and forms a part of the computer system housing 10.

- A resilient tongue 722 is formed in the upper surface of the housing 720 and this bears
15 down on the casing 702 of the CD-ROM drive when it is inserted in the housing 720.

- A detent 724 is formed by a corner at the rear of the housing, and this is operable to engage with the latch 708 at the end of the elongate springy portion of the latching member 704 when the CD-ROM drive has been fully inserted within the media drive
20 housing 720. The combination of the resilient tongue 722 and the detent 724 for latching with the latch 708 of the latch member 704 of the inserted media drive 34 means that the CD-ROM drive can be securely held in a removable manner without the use of fasteners and tools. The resilient metal tongue 722 integral with the metal media drive housing 720 also serves to ground the media drive casing.

- 25 A circuit board 725 with a connector 726 is provided at the rear of the media drive housing for effecting electrical connection to the connector 712 on the CD-ROM drive 34.

- 30 Figure 6 is a further illustration of the media drive housing of an embodiment of the invention. This shows the front of the computer system housing 10 with the front

bezel 19 and the CD-ROM drive 34 removed. At the bottom right (as seen in Figure 6) of the aperture 740 forming the interior of the media drive bay housing, there is a step 736 with electromagnetic interference fingers 738 mounted at the top. Behind the step 736 a rail 734 forms a slide for supporting the CD-ROM drive 34. At the bottom left (as seen in Figure 6) of the aperture 740 forming the interior of the media drive bay housing, there is a rail 732 forming a further slide for supporting the CD-ROM drive 34. The rail 734 is higher than the rail 732 in the present instance as the CD-ROM drive to be used has a portion of reduced thickness at the bottom right (as viewed with respect to the direction of insertion into the drive bay housing 720), as can be seen from Figure 3 and 4.

The resilient tongue 722, in bearing down on the top of the CD-ROM drive casing 702, has the effect of bearing the CD ROM drive 34 down onto the support surfaces formed by the rails 732 and 734. This further enhances the stable mounting of the CD-ROM drive within the media drive housing 720, and avoids the risk of excessive noise in use due to vibration.

Although a particular embodiment of the invention has been described, it will be appreciated that the invention is not limited thereto and that many modifications, including additions, deletions and substitutions may be made within the spirit and scope of the claimed invention.

For example, although in the present instance the media drive is a CD-ROM drive, in other examples the media drive could be another sort of media drive, for example a Digital Versatile Disk (DVD) drive, a tape drive, etc.